A GUIDEBOOK FOR HUMAN RESOURCES PLANNING

Maryland Department of State Planning

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How to get the most from this
Guidebook for Human Resources Planning

This Guidebook has been especially designed so that you – the reader, the local official, the program administrator or manager, the planner, the interested citizen – can get the most from it. The Guidebook is divided into six sections that answer some of the most common questions about comprehensive human resources planning: What it is, how it can help local governments, how a county can start a human resources planning process, etc. The final section provides three examples of human resources planning processes currently underway in three counties in Maryland. These examples illustrate the differences in scope and structure that a planning process may assume.

You may find it valuable to read through this Guidebook from start to finish. It is also possible that you may want to read only selected sections that provide guidance in specific areas of interest to you. The Guidebook has been purposely designed to serve in both of these capacities. As you read the various sections of the Guidebook, try to keep in mind the specific nature of your jurisdiction – its unique character, strengths, and organizational structures. The general guidance provided in the Guidebook can them be applied to your situation to help initiate or improve a comprehensive human resources planning process.

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Why should local governments be interested in comprehensive human resources planning?

Summary

- It helps a community to know itself better.

- Decision-making is improved.

- Limited fiscal resources necessitate effective planning and budgeting.

- The county is a manageable level of government where the results of planning can be realized.

- It helps a community to know itself better.

When a community undertakes and participates in a planning process, it is like looking into a mirror. A true picture of that community emerges - revealing the good and the bad - but at least revealing it objectively and honestly. That image presents two opportunities to citizens, professionals, and elected officials: to maintain or strengthen what is healthy and positive, and to begin work on correcting or eliminating the negative aspects of that community.

This analogy is not meant to oversimplify the process. Planning is a deliberate activity. It involves commitment and a willingness to become involved if its rewards are going to be realized. It requires time, energy, and money - all resources that seem to be in short supply. Why then, should a community undertake a human resources planning process? In short, because the pay-offs are worth the investment.

The various stages of the planning process - especially the first stages, such as needs assessment, resource inventory, priority setting, and development of goals and objectives - require a community to look closely at itself to examine where it is and where it wants to be. Planning - which has been called the art of designing the future - gives a community the opportunity to take the lead role in shaping its own future. It will not have to blindly accept those conditions (often costly and painful) that develop in the years that follow.

An example which can serve to illustrate this point is the need for planning for services to meet the needs of the elderly. Both the number and the relative proportion of elderly in our population have been growing. This trend is expected to continue through at least the year 2000, when it will begin to decline. Not realizing the implications on our society of this growing segment of our population will mean that countless older citizens will be institutionalized before their need is real, others will suffer from lack of meaningful employment and/or socialization activities, and still others will be shunted from one health care facility to another boarding facility like pawns

on a chess board. A comprehensive human resources planning process could help to avoid these unnecessary (as well as costly) condtions. Jointly, service agencies and citizens can design innovative methods to meet the needs of the elderly. This can happen only after existing resources are inventoried and then compared to needs; in short, when people participate in a comprehensive human resources planning process.

- ● **Decision-making is improved.**

Counties today are faced with a variety of pressures. Urbanization and changing growth patterns have far-reaching effects upon a county's tax base while its citizens demand new or additional services. Counties with a stable or constant population base and counties that are experiencing a decling population base also face unique pressures in meeting the needs of their citizens. It is often very difficult for counties to respond to the needs of the various groups of a community - they often find themselves attempting to respond to whichever need or concern they consider more "worthy," or worse yet, responding to the group that either speaks up first or speaks the loudest. An effective human resources planning process would eliminate this "crisis-response" pattern.

The planning process provides an information base to assist in making important decisions. Although budget decisions will always be difficult to make, the local elected official who bases these decisions upon a standard measure can be reassured, knowing that no one group has an advantage over another because they lobbied the hardest for their "cause."

It is not uncommon for the planning, funding, and delivery of human services to be carried out by different levels of government. Many programs are Federally funded, State supervised, and locally administered. Other services are based on regional growth patterns, such as transportation or sewer services. Still others represent combinations such as joint State/local authority which determines educational policy and services. These combined and sometimes complicated funding and administrative patterns necessitate that energies and attention be focused into those areas where the county

can have direct impact. Comprehensive human resources planning at the county level cannot (and should not be mistaken in its purpose) influence all of the layers of decision-making that are beyond its immediate realm. It can, however, serve to improve the quality of local sources through improved decision-making.

The quality of decisions is enhanced by the type and quality (not necessarily quantity) of information that is available to help make those decisions. Various elements of the planning process are geared specifically to providing such background information. Local elected officials who are committed to "good government" and the qualities implicit in that concept, including efficiency and effectiveness in the management and delivery of services, will benefit from the information and logical thought process that planning produces. Having information at hand is one thing; taking full advantage of it is an opportunity no responsible official should pass up.

- **Limited fiscal resources necessitate effective planning and budgeting.**

During the 1960's, massive amounts of Federal aid poured into the nation's states, counties, and cities. These funds were channeled largely through categorical grant programs of the "Great Society." It was the philosophy of both the executive and legislative branches of government that many, if not all, of our complex social problems could be solved if enough money, personnel, and energy could be devoted to them. The response to this posture was the advent of the "New Federalism" of the 70's which has been characterized by a move towards increased local decision-making to solve local problems.

The era of New Federalism was heralded by the advent of revenue sharing, which provided funds to State and local governments to spend within a variety of several broadly defined areas of concern. The use of these funds in the wisest and most cost-beneficial manner requires some attention and forethought be given to the problems or needs a particular community may have. A comprehensive human resources planning process can provide some of the answers that may make the job of the local elected official easier; With better information, the decision-making process can be made more realistic. The base upon which

decisions are made will be improved, and the quality of decisions should reflect that improvement.

The economic situation has created budget "crunches" at all levels of government, but it is probably more strongly felt at the local level where service demands and costs have been steadily escalating for the past decade. This trend is not expected to change in the foreseeable future. It is becoming more and more important to plan for the most beneficial use of limited resources. The name of the game appears to be doing the same (or more!) with less. Comprehensive human resources planning provides a method for economizing, goal-setting for the future, reducing overlap among programs, increasing effectiveness among programs, and making more effective use of limited local dollars. And, because comprehensive planning involves an overall appraisal of community needs, it will allow the locality to use State and Federal dollars within broadly defined areas of need – but with greater attention to locally identified problems or concerns.

- **The county is a manageable level of government where the results of planning can be realized.**

Maryland, not unlike many other States, delivers many of its human services through a State-supervised and locally administered system. Social services to individuals and families and unemployment insurance and services are offered through county and outreach offices of the State Department of Human Resources. Local health services are also provided through county offices. Other human services (such as correctional and legal services, education, housing programs, vocational rehabilitation programs, some programs or services to the elderly, and many other human services) are delivered at the local or county level. This is the very reason why planning is most meaningful at this level of government.

Because so many services are delivered at the local level, it is easy to assume that all needs are being met and that citizens have access to the services they need. This is usually not the way things are, however, because services are planned and delivered independently of each other. One of the important results of a comprehensive human

resources planning process is that the various service delivery patterns become known and understood. This helps to establish linkages between services. Human needs are rarely isolated to one problem area--they are multi-dimensional and have spill-over effects. If human service agencies are aware of each other and the services each can provide, then appropriate referrals can be made helping to eliminate the "uni-lateral" or single-agency approach to solving human problems.

It is also important to realize that there is an increasing Federal and State expectation that coordination of human services will take place at the local level. It is necessary that local governments take the initiative in moving towards comprehensive human resources planning. This what comprehensive human resources planning is all about--planning for a coordinated approach to meeting human needs in the most effective way possible.

2

Just what is comprehensive human resources planning?
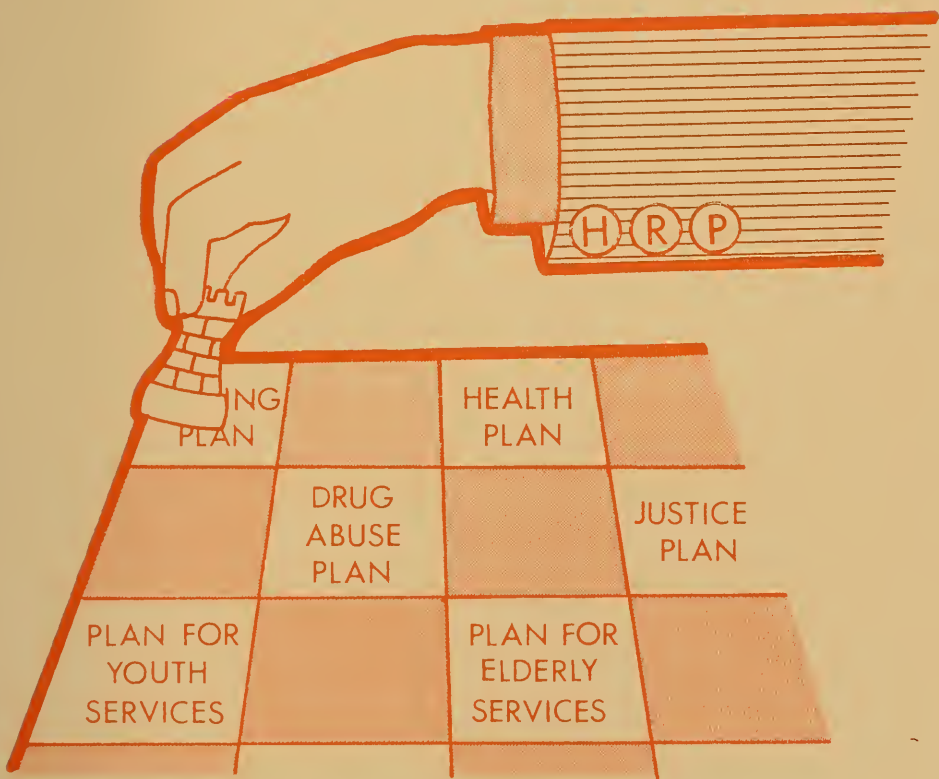
Summary

- It is planning in a coordinated manner to better meet people's needs.

- It enhances current planning and budgeting efforts.

- It is planning in a coordinated manner to better meet people's needs.

Comprehensive human resources planning is a process of thinking about broad community needs and designing services or strategies to meet these needs. This comprehensive human resources planning process can be better understood by taking a closer look at each of its parts:

1) Most important, it is concerned with <u>human resources</u>. It is about meeting the needs of people – about developing the ways to meet these needs in the future. This means that it includes all service programs which meet human needs and contribute to personal growth and social development. Examples include health care, corrections, education, nutritional services, employment services and counseling. Most human resource programs fall into one of the following categories:

- services which offer direct care for individuals (e.g., this can be short term, like day-care services for pre-school children or long-term, like hospitalization for the chronically ill);
- services which protect society (e.g., public safety);
- services which invest in people (e.g., manpower programs);
- services which assist persons in overcoming social or economic disadvantages (e.g., special education programs for children).

2) The process is <u>comprehensive</u>. This means that it considers the needs of the entire community at one time. For example, children's nutrition affects their learning in school; their education affects their ability to perform well in a job; and so on. This process involves looking at how people's needs are related. It involves developing service programs which will consider human needs in a holistic and coordinated manner in order to meet the greatest possible community need with the best combination of services. This planning process contrasts with the present practice of designing separate solutions in different areas piecemeal, with little coordination. <u>Comprehensive</u> also refers to the fact that new approaches to meeting human needs are developed through cooperation. Departments or agencies

which had previously worked alone towards meeting human needs will now work together in an <u>interdepartmental</u> effort, helping to assure that all service perspectives are taken into account.

3) The process is a <u>planning</u> process. This means that it involves a logical thought sequence which begins with a step-by-step analysis of human needs and goes from those needs to designing service programs or action strategies to match those needs.

The human resources planning process should not hold any special mystique for local governments. The process is similar to that of land-use or natural resources planning with which counties may be more familiar. (Steps in the planning process are outlined in Chapter III). As counties move towards planning for human needs, they will undoubtedly benefit from having instituted such a process; the planning process assures continued improvement of decision-making in all areas of local government.

Comprehensive planning is not meant to be a <u>substitute</u> for categorical planning; Federal and State legislation will probably never move in that direction. Special-purpose planning will continue to be important in that it will represent the appropriate forum for issues to be addressed in depth. Health systems agencies, for example, play a valuable role in developing a health plan for a region. Area agencies on aging also have an integral role in planning for the needs of the elderly. Comprehensive human resources planning would not minimize (and should not replace) the planning activities of these or other human service agencies, but would build upon them so that the planning efforts of each agency can be enhanced. It will help to integrate these efforts so that human needs can be a addressed in a coordinated manner, and so that an effective service delivery system can be developed that is responsive to a community's needs.

- It enhances current planning and budgeting efforts.

The nature and the advantages of instituting a <u>comprehensive</u> human resources planning process can be highlighted by comparing it to current special-purpose planning practices. Most commonly in the past, Federal or State funds have been made available to localities on a time-limited (usually one to three years) basis for a single problem (e.g., drug addiction) or for a single population group (e.g., low-income persons). The resulting programs and the planning for them are called "categorical" because they are tied to single categories of problems or persons.

Categorical planning and the comprehensive planning process discussed here are similar in that they both involve assessment of needs and design of programs to meet these needs. They differ, however, in their scope. Categorical planning is concerned with single population groups or single needs at a time, whereas a comprehensive planning process would be concerned with the many interrelated needs of a community at once.

For example, a locality may be involved in any of the following categorical planning efforts: Health system agencies are mandated to develop an overall plan for health-related concerns within a jurisdiction. Local departments of social services are also involved in planning to meet the service needs of individuals and families. Area agencies on aging are required to prepare annual services plans for the elderly population. At the same time, local education agencies, employment service agencies, and even criminal justice planning agencies are all involved in planning to meet the needs of their specific client populations.

All of this planning concerns human resources, and yet, it is presently done with little or no coordination between departments or levels of government. People's needs are considered without concern for the areas of commonality; that is, without consideration as to the inter-relationships of services as they impact on human development.

A comprehensive plan for human resources, on the other hand, would begin with an overall assessment of the needs of the locality and an inventory of resources available to deal with those needs. Then, it would consider how the available resources of different agencies could be coordinated to maximize their impact on local needs with the least overlap and fewest dollars spent.

The potential for comprehensive planning has been enhanced through several actions by the Federal grovernment in the last few years. First, "block grants" to localities which require comprehensive planning offer encouragement to counties that are considering, or have already moved into, comprehensive planning activities. Block grant programs make available to localities "blocks" of money which may be used however the locality decides, within broadly defined areas of concern. Within the Federally designated areas of concern, communities are encouraged to use these funds to identify the most important local needs and to plan comprehensively to meet them. For example, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act makes Federal money available to localities for a wide reange of manpower needs. The Housing and Community Development Act makes Federal funds available for a wide range of housing-related needs.

As comprehensive human resources planning is a process of coordinating efforts to meet community needs, the effectiveness of the process depends on the ability and willingness of service agencies to share information and coordinate actions. When service agencies must formulate categorical plans in order to receive funding, they could support a comprehensive planning process by consulting with other agencies concerned with related problems and developing plans which enable them to work together in meeting community needs. Comprehensive human resources planning can best be understood as an effort to pull together the various resources available throughout a community to help meet human needs in an integrated manner. It is built upon the belief that 1) human needs are interrelated and 2) their resolution requires a coordinated and comprehensive approach.

The relationship between planning and budgeting should not be overlooked. The products of a comprehensive human resources planning process include better data which indicate a community's strengths and weaknesses, established community priorities, a clearer

understanding of the levels of funding for programs, and increased attention to services effectiveness (evaluation and monitoring). These and other outcomes of the planning process all contribute to better budgeting; and likewise, better budgeting will enhance the planning process because it will provide the opportunity for local input to decision-making and priority-setting. All efforts to integrate planning and budgeting efforts should be encouraged so that each is as reflective of and responsive to a community's true needs as possible. The relationship between these two processes is a mutually supportive one where each improves with improvements to the other.

3

What are the steps in a comprehensive human resources planning process?

EVALUATION
IMPLEMENTATION
ACTION STEPS
GOALS & OBJECTIVES
UNMET NEEDS
COMPARISON
RESOURCE INVENTORY
NEEDS ASSESSMENT
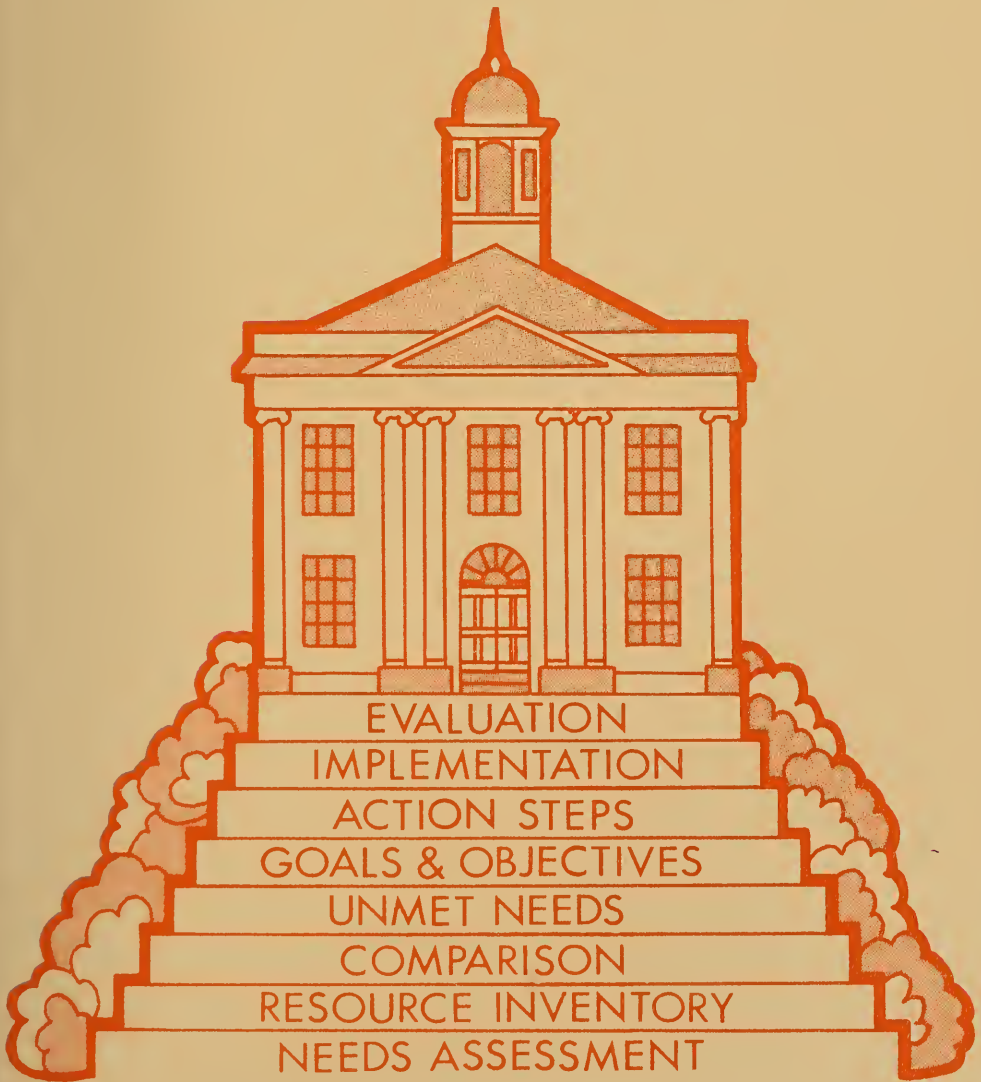
Summary

- Performing a needs assessment;

- Performing a resource inventory;

- Comparing resources to identified needs;

- Identifying unmet and undermet needs, and setting priorities among them;

- Developing goals and objectives;

- Developing actions and programs;

- Implementing programs; and

- Monitoring and evaluation.

● Performing a needs assessment;

A needs assessment is usually the first step of a comprehensive human resources planning process. Although planning is concerned with the development of sensible alternatives for the future, this cannot be accomplished until the existing conditions of a community are clearly understood. A needs assessment is probably the most time-consuming step in the planning process, but considering how important it is for both sound planning and responsible government, it is well worth the effort. It will lay the groundwork for all other steps of the planning process.

In comprehensive human resources planning, an accepted working definition of a needs assessment process is the identification of broad and commonly agreed-upon needs or community problems. A needs assessment identifies issues that affect significant numbers of community residents--such as the special needs for youth employment, or pre-natal health care for adolescent mothers. It would not, for example, be concerned with the particular problems facing one family that are not common to other people in the community.

Needs assessments are performed routinely. The development of a budget is, in a sense, a needs assessment, because it represents identified problems or conditions that government has agreed to ad-dress in a priority manner. Local officials also formulate needs assessments in a variety of other ways. The tabulation of constitu-ent's phone calls or letters about concerns gives the local official some sense of what kinds of problems are affecting large numbers of persons, and where government can and should intervene. These kinds of impressions of need are very important in the needs assess-ment process. Public officials, from their unique perspective in the community, have special viewpoints which should be taken into account during the needs assessment process. This is also true of human service providers such as administrators of employment programs, family counselors, drug-abuse treatment coordinators, and the like. The third important group that should be involved in needs assess-ment is community residents. Their input is often forgotten or under-played, but it is essential if an accurate assessment of a

total community's needs is to be made. Public meetings, surveys of residents, and interviews with knowledgeable local persons can help to elicit a community's assessment of need.

Impressions of need(s) make up the qualitative assessment of n need. Also important is a quantitative assessment of need. Quantitative measures of need are frequently available as a result of the ongoing data collection efforts of public or private planning or service-delivery agencies. Sometimes new data will have to be collected. The meshing of qualitative data (what types of needs exist?) and quantitative data (how great is the need?) will help a community to begin to think about the directions in which it must move to address these problems. This coordinated process of needs assessment will help a community to 1) know itself better; 2) receive its fair share of Federal or State funds through grant-in-aid programs; 3) begin to plan for realistic and sensible alternatives and problem resolutions; and 4) avoid panic response to crisis situations in which funds and attention are misdirected into the "problem of the week."

● **Performing a resource inventory;**

As a companion piece to the identification of community needs, it will be necessary to ascertain what community resources exist to meet these needs. Resources can be of two types; they can be presently provided services or available resources to support new or innovative programming. A resource inventory provides an accounting of all services available in the community. This accounting serves two purposes. First, it shows how public and private human services are presently allocated in the community. Second, it permits the identification of possible areas of flexibility for using these resources differently and more effectively in the future.

It should be noted that a resource inventory and needs assessment can sometimes occur simultaneously; this can be accomplished when a questionnaire is designed to elicit responses to both. These two steps in the planning process are also interchangeable in their

sequence. A resource inventory can precede the needs assessment with no harm to the integrity of the planning process.

A resource inventory can be compiled through existing information. For example, local health and welfare councils often publish a directory of human resource agencies, which describes the programs and services of public and private agencies. Local libraries often maintain resource files on human services and often provide information and referral services. These information sources can be referenced during a resource inventory effort. If this information is not available or is not periodically updated, it may be necessary to collect it first hand. This is usually accomplished through means of a questionnaire sent to public and private service providers in the community. The questionnaire will focus on presently available services as well as potential areas of new or coordinated service provision. As decisions about the scope of the resource inventory work are made at this point, it will become apparent that these decisions will also mold the course of the total planning effort. Questions of the scope of the planning effort will be determined by the choice of agencies to be interviewed. Similar questions regarding the types of data to be handled will be answered at this point.

The matrix developed by the Department of State Planning is included on the next page as an example of a classification scheme. This format allows the grouping of State services for easy identification. Some counties have found that this format can be adapted to their own resource inventory efforts, while other counties have modified the format to suit their own needs. It is included here as an example of only one possible classification effort. The value of a matrix or chart which portrays the results of the inventory is in its ability to graphically depict a large amount of information in a single place, in a way which is clearly and readily understandable.

Agency heads are aware of what services their own agencies provide and whom their clients are. A resource inventory brings together the specific information which agency heads have, in the kind of an overview which elected officials need. This can be accomplished by surveying all public and private service agencies in the community.

CHART 1 : ACTIVITY SECTOR -TARGET POPULATION FRAMEWORK

Activity Sector \ Target Populations	Preserva-tion & Im-provem'nt of Health	Preserv. of Public Safety & Justice	Advance-ment of Economic Well-being	Promotion of Educa-tional De-velopm'nt	Adequate Housing & Commun. Environ.	Meeting Human Transpor-tation	Expanding Recreation-al Oppor-tunities	Optimal Human & Environ. In-teraction	Developm't of Social Potential	Other
INFANT and YOUNG CHILD 0 - 5										
CHILDREN 6-12										
YOUTH 13 - 18										
YOUNG ADULT 19 - 25										
ADULT 26 - 64										
AGED 65 & over										
DISADVANTAGED										
HANDICAPPED and/or DISABLED										

Making a resource inventory is like drawing a map. It is a process of collecting information about services which decision-makers may use for future decision making or policy determination.

The following is an example of questions a survey would ask, and the kind of answers which an agency serving unemployed youth might provide:

(1) What services does the agency provide, and who receives the services?
— vocational training, for high school dropouts;

(2) How much money does the agency spend on these services, and where does the money come from?
— $200,000 from U. S. Department of Labor-CETA funds;

(3) How many clients does the agency serve now?
— 2,000;

(4) How many clients could the agency serve at the maximum?
— 2,200 (the agency is able to serve more youths than are presently enrolled);

(5) What possibility is there for this agency to coordinate its work with other agencies?
— It could work more closely with the high schools in accepting referrals and providing the most appropriate kind of training for students who drop out of the schools.

When the responses from all service agencies are analyzed, better information will be available about how community resources are being utilized. Decision makers will be able to tell 1) whose needs are being served by agencies; 2) whether agencies are serving as many people as they could; 3) whether several agencies in some particular area (such as youth unemployment) may be duplicating efforts; and 4) whether there are areas in need of greater coordination so that services may be more effectively delivered with a minimum of program and resource duplication. The information collected in the resource inventory will assist decision-makers as they move into the next stage of a comprehensive human resources planning process: the comparison of needs to resources.

- Comparing resources to identified needs;

Before deciding which human resource programs or services to support in the future, a community will want to know what effect the existing programs have had. Comparing the results of the needs assessment with the results of the resource inventory will help to indicate how service agencies are currently meeting community needs; this is a basic step that must precede any direction-setting for the future. In some areas, the comparison may show that resources currently match needs. In these areas, decision-makers will want to make sure the adequate resources continue to be available as needs fluctuate in the future. In areas where services do not adequately meet needs, decision-makers will want to consider policy changes and new uses of resources to increase the provision of services in the future.

A comparison of resources to needs can be a simple process: the numbers of persons having particular needs (for example, number of persons needing job training) can be compared with the amount of service resources available in those areas (for example, number of available training placements). In addition, because communities have limited budgets, they will want to know how much the services are costing and whether this cost can be considered reasonable. (They should look at the total cost of job training placements and the number of placements, to see whether the average cost is one which the community can afford.)

It is important, here, to consider measures of <u>efficiency</u>; that is, producing the greatest number and/or variety of services at as low a cost as possible. The elimination of waste in delivery of services is a prime factor in efficiency considerations. Questions about efficiency and effectiveness are traditionally handled during the "evaluation" stage of the planning process. They will be discussed as they relate to evaluation and monitoring in III-H, but are mentioned here because they are considerations that are important in every stage of the planning process.

The comparison of resources and needs should help community members answer another question: Are the programs meeting their originally designed intent? While it is basic to know whether there are enough services available to match the number of persons in need, it is also important to be certain that the services provided really help the clients in the way that they are supposed to. After all, a community wants to spend its money not just because the provision of services is good in itself, but because services actually help reduce needs and problems in the community. For example, it is important to have job training for unemployed youths, but the training programs should help the youths get permanent jobs after training. This final outcome, the employment of the youths who receive the training services, is considered to be the effectiveness of the services in reducing community needs. Sometimes the final outcome may not be as easy to measure as whether or not someone becomes employed. The desired outcome of health care resources, for example, is to promote good health and often the best measure of the effectiveness of such services is only personal impressions, rather than any quantitative measure. However effectiveness may be measured, a community wants its services to have the greatest impact for the least money spent. This is called maximizing the cost-effectiveness or cost-benefit of service resources.

After comparing resources and needs, a community will better be able to determine what areas will need what kind of resources in the future. It is highly unlikely that all identified needs can be met at the same time; limited fiscal resources prohibit such a response. The planning process, and especially the first three steps (the needs assessment, resource inventory, and comparison of resources to needs) will allow a rational charting of the directions a county must take to move towards meeting the most pressing needs of its residents. The planning process aids the local official in thinking about the future and in arriving at purposeful decisions to best meet that future prepared.

- Identifying unmet and undermet needs, and
  setting priorities among them;

When the inventory of available resources is compared to the
assessment of existing needs, it is then possible to identify community
needs which are completely unmet, or partly undermet, by current
resources. Because the list of unmet and undermet needs may be long
and the community may not be able to respond to all of them, it is
important to set priorities among these needs. The setting of
priorities among unmet and undermet needs should be the focus of
policy-making efforts.

Basically, the process of setting priorities requires that
involved actors reach a decision about what kind of needs they believe
should be first addressed. Needs assessment is a technical process,
and it is usually an activity that is performed by human resources'
planners or agency staff. Priority-setting is a decision-making
process which does not require special training. It requires only
that people make their views clear. The priorities should represent
the views of members of the community who experience problems, as well
as those who have responsibility for providing resources to deal with
the problems. Therefore, the process of setting priorities should
include elected officials, service agency personnel, and citizens.
Because citizens are a diverse group, their views can be represented
in several ways. There may be designated "citizen" representatives in
a formal priority-setting process, citizens' views can be collected by
surveys, or expressed in community meetings called to discuss priori-
ties.

However the process of setting priorities is organized, it will
be necessary to decide what criteria will be used to set priorities
among needs. People can be most creative if they begin by considering
what kind of needs they would ideally like to give priority. These
ideal criteria describe the kinds of problems the community would like
to address first if there were no constraints of money, time, and the
like. For example, priority may be given to addressing needs which
have the following characteristics:

— needs which affect the largest number of individuals
(e.g., an influenza epidemic);

-- needs which threaten the survival of individuals (e.g.,
water pollution from industrial wastes);

-- needs which threaten the local economy (e.g., widespread
unemployment);

-- needs which seem to be interrelated to other needs
(e.g., poor education which impacts on employment
opportunities, which, in turn, is related to a dependable
income and a stable home environment).

The ranking or setting of priorities should be accomplished with the
above considerations in mind; it helps to move the ideal toward the
real by way of understanding the true impact of problems upon a
community.

After considering what kinds of needs they would _ideally_ like to
attend to, the community will have to consider what kinds of needs
can be _realistically_ addressed. This process is often an extremely
sobering one, as the community realizes it does not have all of the
resources, either financial or staff, to address all of the problems
it has come to recognize. This is exactly where the commitment to a
coordinated planning process may begin to be translated into everyday
actions. The potential for sharing of resources and the creative
resolution of problems are two benefits of a comprehensive human
resources planning process that are especially important when priori-
ties are being set. The planning process helps to "scope in" and bet-
ter define the limits of action.

The very act of setting priorities involves making choices.
Although these choices are often difficult to make, they are facilitated
by careful consideration of all of the potential impacts of each
action. If both the long and short range impact of each decision is
reviewed, a more informed and more realistic solution can be found.
For example, a community may have two major manpower needs: 1) a need
for training for high school dropouts, and 2) a need for job placements
for skilled workers who become unemployed. In choosing criteria for
selecting one of these needs to address first, citizens may decide
ideally to give priority to needs which affect the most individuals.

In a particular community there may be more unemployed skilled workers
than untrained high school dropouts, and this criterion would suggest
giving priority to job placements. However, in considering what is
realistic, citizens may take a hard look at the labor market and
at current Federal legislation and funding. They man conclude
that in the short run it would be relatively difficult to place more
workers in local jobs, and they may find that Federal CETA funds are
available for job training programs. After considering both what
they ideally would like to do and what they realistically can expect
to do, community members may decide to give priority to training high
school dropouts.

● Developing goals and objectives;

Once community members have identified the needs to which they
want to give priority, the next step is to consider possible ways
for meeting those needs. In order to do this, they should begin
by stating clearly and specifically what they expect to do in order
to meet these needs. An explicit statement of goals and objectives
will help community members choose among alternative action strategies,
because they can continually check back to see whether a particular
strategy does what they want to accomplish. A clear statement of
goals and objectives is therefore important for evaluation and
monitoring purposes.

When citizens go about stating goals and objectives, they want
to express them in terms of outcomes which will reduce the needs
they have identified.

Goals describe the desired state of affairs which a program is
expected to accomplish. Goals are generalized statements about an
ideal condition and are usually not quantifiable or stated in measure-
able terms. The attainment of goals is realized through a series
of objectives which are expressed in distinct and quantifiable steps.

Objectives refer to the kind and amount of services or strategies
which would contribute to the attainment of goals. Statements of
service objectives should indicate how many members of specific groups

in particular places will be provided a certain service within a
specified time period.

The development of goals and objectives is usually structured
around two different types of community problems. The first
addresses readily apparent and known needs and problems once they
have developed (e.g., providing services for abused children rather
than prevention programs for families). This approach is most common,
because it is the easiest - people can react to problems once they
arise. However, this approach has two potential shortcomings: 1) it
is possible that if a community takes the position that it will not
concern itself with problems until they develop, local resources may
continually be scattered over many problems in a crisis manner;
2) it is also possible that if a community waits for a problem to
develop, it may be more difficult and more expensive to deal with
than it would have been to prevent its arising in the first place.
Therefore, it may be necessary to select goals and objectives which
address the prevention of future problems (e.g., vocational training
in high schools and programs for high school dropouts, to reduce
the number of people who will be unable to find jobs because they
lack skills).

This latter approach is what comprehensive human resources plan-
ning is all about; the careful attention to the future impacts of all
existing programs so that choices can be made to effectuate the
desired state of the future.

The following example refers to the needs of unemployed youths:

Goal: To reduce the unemployment rate for workers age 16-19.

Objective 1: To develop job counseling and placement services
in every high school of the county within one year.

Objective 2: To develop vocational education programs capable
of serving all students desiring training in high schools
within two years.

Objective 3: To develop vocational training programs for high
school dropouts within $2\frac{1}{2}$ years.

County residents who develop this goal and these objectives are
saying that they want to use several preventive approaches in
reducing youth unemployment. They are saying that they believe that

if the actions listed as objectives are taken within $2\frac{1}{2}$ years, there is a strong likelihood that the goal of reducing unemployment among 16-19 year olds will be attained.

● Developing actions and programs:

As soon as community members have developed clear statements of goals and objectives, they are ready to select the specific courses of action which will meet these goals and objectives.

Through discussions, community members should be able to identify service strategies which may contribute to several goals or objectives at once. When they can do this, they will be able to avoid the frequent difficulty under categorical planning, in which several agencies provide similar services for closely related problems without any coordination. Developing goals, objectives, and explicit strategies in a comprehensive and coordinated manner can lead to significant savings.

Community members want to select an overall mix of services from various agencies which will be the most efficient and the most effective in meeting community needs. In doing this, it is important to review the resource inventories prepared earlier in the planning process. They make it possible to begin with a particular goal, such as providing training for unemployed youth, and to identify all local agencies which currently provide or have the potential of providing any type or level of training. Looking over the different agencies in the inventories, it becomes possible to identify which agencies currently provide more training, which provide training at lower cost, and which provide training more effectively. Thus, citizens can begin with past experiences before selecting action strategies for the future.

As alternative courses of action for meeting goals and objectives are developed, it is important to review the following questions:

-- How much is known about the relationship between the service strategies and the expected outcome (e.g., is the link between "back to basics" or fundamental education clear

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enough to improved test scores or academic performance to
warrant a total revamping of the educational curriculum and
philosophy)?

-- What is the feasibility of a particular approach in terms of
available resources (e.g., is it realistic to talk about a
new facility for children with developmental disabilities
when there is little money available for this purpose)?

-- Does the particular approach maximize the use of available
resources (e.g., if public money available for child care
is limited, could more placements be made possible if this
money were used to subsidize private child care centers,
rather than using it exclusively for public centers)?

-- Does the particular approach complement what other agencies
and jurisdictions are doing in related areas (e.g., is it
reasonable for the county to build an expansive coronary
care unit when the next county already has one)?

-- How effective is a particular approach in terms of meeting
a high percentage of identified unmet or undermet need (e.g.,
should an on-the-job training program be funded if it will
reach only 3% of the unemployed)?

-- How acceptable is the strategy to service providers, potential
clients or other community groups (e.g., should a health main-
tenance organization or other pre-paid medical program be
developed in a community if physicians may not want to parti-
cipate and residents may not want to become members)?

The answers to these questions are not always easy, nor is it
possible to rank them all in a neat and orderly fashion; there is no
such exact scientific method to human services planning. But these
questions are provocative and should help a community to think about
human services in a broader and more systematic way. This thought
process will help the community realize the necessity of developing
service or action strategies that are interrelated.

When a community determines the strategies that will best meet
its goals and objectives, it should do as much as it can to coordinate
the services of different agencies. It is not uncommon to find
several agencies providing similar services designed to serve the
same population groups, often with the same problems. These services

are usually provided without the benefit of consultation or coordina-
tion among agencies. The planning and delivery of services in a
comprehensive manner will result in reduced program duplication,
lowered service costs, and more creative resolution of problems.
Some specific examples of coordinated approaches to meeting community
needs include sharing of facilities, pooling of resources, utiliza-
tion of a joint intake or referral form, and the like. These can
be some of the tangible products of a community's involvement in a
comprehensive human services planning process.

Actual service strategies should clearly delineate the roles
and responsibilities of individual agencies in meeting commonly
agreed-upon needs. For example, if the nutritional needs of the
low-income elderly are considered to be important, it will be neces-
sary for the many agencies serving or indirectly impacting the
elderly to have a clear understanding of their part in the total
package designed to meet this need. The services and resources of
the local health department, local department of social services,
ommission on aging, area agency on aging, and various private
service agencies can be combined so that an efficient "package" of
services can be designed. In this way, no single agency will have
the burden of providing all the services necessary to meet the needs
of the elderly. This also is a logical approach because each agency
has specialized services to offer. Health, nutrition, transportation
and social services are just a few of the services that can be effec-
tively coordinated to provide what is known as a "continuum of care"
to the elderly. This type of service strategy will clearly outline
the involvement that each agency will have in the planning and
delivery of services to the elderly and will also help to assure that
the interrelated needs of the elderly can be met.

At the stage of developing action strategies, it is also import-
ant for a community to consider alternative strategies or program
designs. It is critical that a community realize that the alloca-
tion or budgetary process may not necessarily match the priority
ranking of need. Nor may the political current be favorable to
supporting the ranking of social problems to be addressed. Because
both of these situations are quite real, it is necessary to develop
effective alternative courses of action. Such foresight will help

to prevent situations in which vast amounts of energy and resources become committed to "dead-end" or "no-win" solutions. The development of alternative action strategies will enable the planning process to remain flexible and therefore viable.

- Implementing programs;

General goals and specific policy decisions are translated to action strategies (and alternatives) and final program decisions in the _implementation_ stage of the planning process. Implementation may refer to the development of service strategies by public and/or private human service agencies as well as the development of coordinative, regulatory, advocacy, and other important functions which can be performed by local government.

The implementation process can be described as having two stages. The first step involves a review of the action strategy for its logic and general feasibility. It is appropriate to consider whether the action is consistent with the prevailing economic and political climate, whether it is compatible with existing policies, and whether the action will generate support from the key sectors in the community. In short, is the intended action well-designed, carefully thought through, and likely to receive acceptance?

The second phase of implementation is more "nuts and bolts" oriented and involves the actual shaping and putting into place of action strategies. Several questions will help to bring this process into clearer focus. It is important to consider (or reconsider) the exact nature of the intended action and all of the steps that are necessary to turn this policy determination into action. Parallel to a review of all of the necessary action steps is a consideration of the mechanisms of the intended action - how will these steps be carried out? The "how" of implementation involves thorough attention to the organization changes that may be necessary, the technical aspects of any steps of the action strategy, and the methods that will be used to generate support for the intended actions. Although goals and objectives should have been determined in an earlier phase of the planning process, it is timely to reconsider specific

objectives or outcomes of intended actions so that their attainment
may be gauged or monitored. Implementation then clearly becomes the
stage at which policy determinations are turned into specific manage-
able actions.

It is probably helpful to consider an example to illustrate the
various considerations inherent in the implementation phase of the
planning process. Assume that a community has undertaken a needs
assessment, and that health and social services for the elderly have
been determined to be a priority to be addressed. An inventory of
services is performed, and it reveals that there are a variety
of local and regional programs available to serve the elderly, but
that these services have been poorly coordinated in the past and
therefore not as effective as they might be. There are limited fiscal
resources to support the development of any new programs, so the
community decides that it will concentrate on pursuing a course of
action that is built upon coordination of existing resources. The
community determines that its goal will be to enable the elderly to
lead independent lives. This goal will be realized through the
development of an integrated health and social services support
system that is accessible to all of the elderly who need it. It is
further determined that within the first year of this effort, atten-
tion will be focused on the coordination of existing services, with
gradually increasing involvement in the development of new services
in future years. The coordination of services is an idea that all
segments of the community can accept because of its objectivity.
The fact that no new funds are involved also helps to make this
activity appealing. Appropriate roles and responsibilities for key
segments of the community in meeting this objective are delineated.
Local service provider agencies (both public and private) agree to
meet to work together and explore such alternatives as sharing of
resources, improved referrals, and a telephone reassurance program
alternately staffed by different agencies. Local government provides
a key leadership role by publicly supporting the activities of these
agencies; it may provide meeting space, persuade otherwise autonomous
agencies to become involved, or work with the business community to
develop senior discount coupons for various products and services.
The business community also does its part through the provision of

employment opportunities for seniors and other valuable actions.
Private citizens volunteer their services at nutrition sites, provide
transportation to medical appointments, or help deliver meals to
home-bound seniors. The limits to a community's contribution to the
well-being of its senior citizens are boundless, if this goal receives
priority attention.

● Monitoring and evaluation.

It is unfortunate that discussions about <u>monitoring</u> and <u>evaluation</u>
are always left as the concluding section of any outline of a planning
process. Their discussion as the last step of the process could be
misconstrued to imply that they are either unimportant or are after
thoughts to be considered after one cycle of the planning process has
been completed. Nothing could be farther from the truth. If a lack of
credibility has plagued human resources professionals - both planners
and program managers - it is most likely because of the lack of
attention they have paid to the questions of efficiency and effective-
ness of human services and programs. Human services planning, having
never achieved the distinction of being a science, is considered an
art; as such, it has tended to be weak on quantitative measures of
accountability. This need not be the case.

It is important that attention be paid to both monitoring and
evaluation throughout the planning process. For example, if goals and
objectives are carefully designed, with attention paid to monitoring
and evaluation, these activities can be made much more valuable. The
results of monitoring and evaluation activities feed back into the
planning process to assure that programs and action strategies are
truly responsive to existing needs. Monitoring and evaluation provide
information about program efficiency, effectiveness and impact; this
information will assist in assessing which community needs remain
unmet and in setting priorities among these unmet needs for further
attention.

The words "monitoring and evaluation" are often used inter-
changeably - they really should not be. While the differences in
their meanings may seem subtle, it is important to understand them.

Monitoring refers to an ongoing process of comparing actual to
planned accomplishments. It is a way of stopping and taking time to
check on the operation of the programs that have been implemented to
meet a community's needs. Are the programs running smoothly? Are
the program objectives being accomplished? These and other similar
questions can be answered by performance or program monitoring. As
an example, if a community's goal is the reduction of the unemployment
rate for youth (16-19 years) and one of the objectives identified to
meet this goal had been the introduction of job counseling and place-
ment services in all county high schools, program monitoring would
assure that these services are in fact operating. Beyond the simple
question of whether the program is operating in the prescribed manner,
it is also important to review the cost factor involved in the pro-
vision of services. Financial monitoring can be performed to help
assure the maximum level of service at the least cost per unit of
service delivered. If School A provides career counseling at $35
per student while School B provides this service for $50, financial
monitoring will help to determine if the programs are providing similar
services and how the higher costs can be reduced. When both performance
and financial monitoring are combined, planners and program managers
can get a sense of the efficiency of services. Put simply, efficiency
refers to doing things better. Its companion, effectiveness, refers
to doing the right things better. These determinations are at the
heart of impact evaluation.

Impact evaluation will assist in judging whether community prob-
lems are being addressed through the particular programs and action
strategies that have been specifically designed to meet them. Impact
evaluation helps to assess the impact of programs in meeting identi-
fied needs. Again, referring to the goal of a reduced unemployment
rate for youth aged 16-19, impact evaluation would address the ques-
tion of whether the programs currently operating in the community
are indeed contributing to the solution of the basic problem of youth
employment. Are the youth employment and counseling services leading
to job placements? Are the youth who have been placed with jobs
content with their employment? Answers to such questions will help
planners and program managers make the necessary adjustments in
community services so that goals may be realized. Impact evaluation

usually goes beyond specific agency or program concerns and looks at the impact of programs or services with as broad a perspective as possible.

The process of monitoring is considered to be a simpler task than impact evaluation. However, there are established methods for doing both monitoring and evaluation, and a community can usually draw on its own technical experts to provide guidance and assistance in these areas. Financial monitoring essentially involves comparing cost figures for the actual delivery of services with the cost figures set out in the budget for these services. If statements of objectives have been carefully written, then performance monitoring should involve a review of programs to see if they are in place and operating. It is easy to understand why monitoring activities are usually performed by managers who are most familiar with the details of program operation and who understand the funding mechanisms and other program constraints.

Impact evaluation can be more complicated. For some goals, such as reducing unemployment, success is easy to measure: either people have jobs, or they don't. However, many goals are more complicated or less straight-forward. For example, many goals for health care involve improving how people in the community "feel" or reducing their suffering from illness. It is often difficult to get a much more precise measure of program effect than a well-informed subjective impression. For this reason, decision-makers sometimes rely on clients' statements about how they feel about services as an approximate measure of the impact of the services on clients' needs.

The time element can also be considered during an evaluation. For example, it is relatively easy to determine whether a service is meeting its objectives at any one point in time. A certain amount of money is being spent, and a certain number of services are being provided, and they can readily be compared to the statement of objectives. However, it may take considerable time to discover whether a service, even when it meets all performance requirements, actually leads to the intended effect on community needs. For example, whether job counseling in high schools eventually leads to lower unemployment after graduation may take several years to detect.

Furthermore, youth unemployment may go down for a number of reasons (including an increase in the number of jobs available), and it may be difficult to identify the specific influence of job counseling on this decline.

In summary, the differences between monitoring and evaluation can be best understood if one thinks of monitoring as an on-going and continuous process that is performed during a project's or program's operation. Modification or adaptation may be necessary during the monitoring process to make necessary improvements. Monitoring takes two forms, performance and financial.

In contrast, evaluation is usually performed upon completion of a program or service for the purpose of reviewing the value of that service and for improving future program or service plans. It, too, can take two forms, impact or time.

An excellent reference source for those interested in evaluation is a 1973 publication of the Urban Institute, entitled <u>Practical Program Evaluation for State and Local Governments</u>, by Harry Hatry, Richard E. Winnie, and Donald Fisk.

4

How does a county begin a comprehensive human resources planning process?

C.H.R.P.
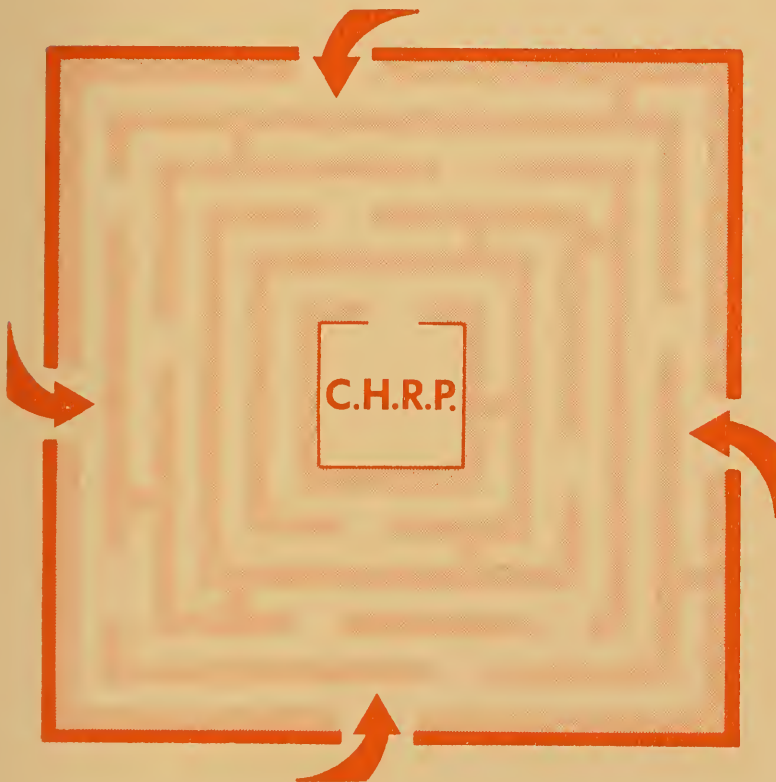
Summary

- A county can generate support and encourage participation in the planning process.

- An office for comprehensive human resources planning can be designated by the Chief Elected Official; or

- The responsibilities of the county planning office can be expanded to include comprehensive human resources planning; or

- A Council of Social Agencies may act as the forum for achieving comprehensive human resources planning.

- A county can generate support and encourage participation in the planning process.

The initiation of a human resources planning process can originate in many places. The idea that a jurisdiction needs and will benefit from this process may be in the minds of different people and may even be a part of the operational philosophy of the county's service agencies or local government. <u>Support</u> for a comprehensive human resources planning process is obviously the necessary prerequisite - but it is only that. This guidebook is about generating support and translating that support into active involvement.

As has been stated throughout the earlier sections of this guidebook, comprehensive human resources planning is a process in which public and private service delivery agencies work in a cooperative manner to identify community needs and develop creative and coordinated resolutions to these problems. It is recognized that some jurisdictions which are not presently involved in human resources planning may find these definitions astract or difficult to put into practice. Certain key guidelines can help to provide a framework or a structure so that the planning process may begin. The process of beginning involves a convening of all possible participants. The invitation can come from an elected official, any individual in the community, including a staff person or director of a service agency, an interested citizen, a member of the business community, or an employee of local government. It will be necessary to secure a meeting room, but local agencies and businesses often have board or meeting rooms that are not only large enough to accommodate a large group, but are also available for use at no charge to the community. A few phone calls should take care of this arrangement. It may be wise for such a meeting to be scheduled during lunch hour so that interested persons will not be discouraged from attending because their schedules are too tight. Until a planning process gets off the ground and begins to gain legitimacy, supervisors may be reluctant to grant their staff the time to participate.

There is no doubt that if the planning project is initiated by a local elected official or other high-level representative of local government, participation is likely to be greater. If local government is at all interested in human resources planning, they may be convinced to convene the first meeting with an invitation on county letterhead stationery. This is not to say that other alternative approaches are not successful. The case studies in the last section of this guidebook illustrate an example of a county planning effort that was initiated by an interagency group and has received increasing county government support as that planning project gains legitimacy and moves into concrete work tasks and accomplishments.

It is important, and also reassuring, to know that the human resources planning process actually begins when people first talk about their perception of community services, needs, strengths, or problems. The value of the coordinative function of the planning process – that of bringing people together to share information, build trust, and develop solutions to community problems – is considered by many to be the most important reason for engaging in a planning process. This notion can effectively be used as a confidence builder or rallying point.

A county may feel able to move beyond this coordinative function; some structure to the planning effort will then be needed. What follows are three alternative arrangements which counties may develop to promote or achieve a comprehensive human resources planning process. The organizational characteristics of the three arrangements are described first. Some of these arrangements may be more applicable than others to conditions in a particular county, and local elected officials and service agencies will need to determine which alternative may be most appropriate for them. Following the presentation of the three alternatives, the guidebook focuses on the differences in the roles and responsibilities of the different participants in each of the alternative arrangements.

- An office for comprehensive human
  resources planning can be designated by the
  Chief Elected Official.

One way that a county may initiate a comprehensive human
resources planning process is for local elected officials to estab-
lish or designate an Office for Human Resources Planning with staff
members directly responsible to them. This office would have respon-
sibility for coordinating the plans and programs of public and
voluntary human resource agencies serving the county. For the
purpose of improved management of human services, all county service
departments would submit their plans to the human resources office
for review and/or approval. The office would expect the departments
to confer with each other about ways of cooperatively meeting commun-
ity needs before developing departmental plans. In establishing a
comprehensive planning process, the office would seek the cooperation
of all human service providers in the county. The office might
consult with either of two kinds of citizen advisory boards. The
office might work with boards already related to service agencies
participating in the human resources planning process, or a new
board might be assembled specifically to work with the human resources
planning office.

The office of comprehensive human resources planning would
involve service agencies in developing an overall assessment of
community needs, an inventory of available resources, a statement
of goals, and alternative courses of action designed to meet
mutually identified goals and objectives. Being a part of county
government would give the staff of the human resources office the
authority to promote and carry out this process. In an effort to
avoid program duplication, the office could review agencies' grant
applications to determine their conformance to previously identified
community goals. Resources permitting, the human resources office
could provide technical assistance or the resources to service
departments or agencies to improve their capability of participating
in a comprehensive planning process. The office could organize the
use of appropriately qualified volunteers to assist service agencies
in planning. The county office of human resources could contribute

to the implementation of the comprehensive planning process by supporting service agencies when they apply for Federal or State funds. Finally, the office might choose to utilize county funds to contract for services needed to meet community needs that would otherwise go unmet. A county office of this type, because it is not directly involved in the provision of services, may assume evaluation responsibilities.

What a particular county can do in instituting this model for a comprehensive human resources planning process depends on the staff and other resources available to the county. Counties with fewer resources may establish a human resources planning office with a small staff which begins simply, by systematically reviewing grant applications to see that they contribute to meeting community needs. Even the smallest office will be able to make an important contribution to the development of a needs assessment, a resource inventory, and a comparison between the two. Some counties may find that establishing a separate office for human resources planning is not possible in the short run. These counties may find that it is feasible to give the responsibilities which would go to a small human resources office to either the county's chief administrative officer or the county's budget officer.

How this arrangement actually operates will vary from county to county. However, this alternative has both potential advantages and disadvantages, which local elected officials should be aware of when they consider alternative structures for comprehensive planning. Potential advantages include the following:

First, if the human resources planning office or officer begins with grant application review and only gradually expands responsibilities, this approach can be an inexpensive way to begin human resources planning, and it can be particularly appropriate for counties with limited resources. This approach to comprehensive human resources planning can be accomplished with a minimal financial investment, yet it can still yield significant results to a county. Second, this alternative provides the county with an effective management mechanism for the sound planning and delivery of human services. Administratively, it makes good sense. Third, this alternative increases the accountability of human resources agencies to local elected officials by requiring the

agencies to make planning decisions in a single, comprehensive process.
Fourth, this alternative provides the human resources planning staff
with easy access to local elected officials, who have a good sense of
local needs and can provide information crucial for good planning.
Finally, the close relationship between elected officials and the
planning office or officer means that the staff people involved in
the planning effort can get important public support for the planning
process. Their proximity to local elected officials – the county
decision makers – puts the staff of the planning office at a distinct
advantage to other arrangements where they could be bureaucratically
distant.

This arrangement has two potential disadvantages: First, it is
possible that the close relations between planning staff and elected
officials will lead the planners to become involved in providing day-
to-day constituent services and fighting brush-fires, rather than
doing the long-range planning necessary for comprehensively meeting
community needs. Second, this arrangement, which can be perceived as
basically a management tool, may necessitate other tasks which service
agencies may view as time consuming. Organizationally, a layer is
added between service agencies and the chief elected officials; this
may be seen as cumbersome by those who are used to direct access to
local officials.

- **The responsibilities of the county planning
  office can be expanded to include compre-
  hensive human resources planning.**

A second alternative is for local elected officials to delegate
responsibility for comprehensive human resources planning to the exist-
ing county planning office. Traditionally, the county planning office
has had responsibility for physical planning. Whereas the first alter-
native would involve the creation of an office for human resources
planning, this second alternative would involve expanding the responsi-
bilities of current planners in an existing planning office. If neces-
sary, new staff with expertise in human services planning could be
added to the county planning office.

The responsibilities of the human resources planner(s) in the county planning office would be similar to those of the human resources planning office in the first alternative. Not involved in service delivery, this office would have responsibility for many of the same steps of the planning process as the office for comprehensive planning appointed by the local elected official (as described in the previous Section). Similarly, the level of activity would depend on the size of the human resources staff and the resources available to them. They might begin with relatively limited efforts and expand as they acquired more resources over time. The small staff should not be seen as a drawback to this arrangement; although the process may have a longer "start-up" time, it is nevertheless a valuable and inexpensive way to begin.

This alternative has several potential advantages. First, this alternative is a "cost-contained" way to begin human resources planning, because it takes advantage of an existing organizational staff structure and an existing citizen advisory board. It may be necessary to selectively appoint members to the planning commission (the advisory board) who have an interest in or concern for human services issues; this can be done as other members of the commission reach the expiration of their terms or retire. Second, because the county planning office is a repository for data about the county, the location of human resources planning in this office makes it easy to take advantage of existing data which can identify community needs. Third, this alternative is good management in supporting the integration of human resources and physical planning.

This alternative has one potential disadvantage. It is possible that if human resources planning is located in a physical planning-oriented county planning office, the human resources planning effort may receive less attention and fewer resources than it requires.

- A Council of Social Agencies may act as the
  forum for promoting comprehensive human
  resources planning.

A third alternative depends on the initiative of existing public
and voluntary service agencies. Any number of human resources
agencies may decide to form a council of social agencies to coordinate
human resources planning in the county. The work of the council may
vary from informal discussion of agency activities to a formal
commitment to assess community needs and coordinate efforts to meet
them. This formal commitment is what is really necessary for a
council to carry out comprehensive human resources planning. Each
agency must agree to consult with other agencies about sharing
responsibility for meeting community needs, and each agency's own
planning efforts would reflect this commitment to coordinated and
comprehensive planning.

In this alternative, the planning staff would consist of persons
who could contribute their time supported by member agencies.
Usually member agencies have limited free time to contribute to the
planning activities of the council. Consequently, the council's
capacity to engage in comprehensive human resourves planning depends
to a significant degree on the ability of the council to elicit
meaningful involvement of all of its members. It is also possible
for the council to utilize the skills and resources of volunteers,
students, and neighboring community colleges or universities. Local
health and welfare councils may be able to provide technical assist-
ance, and should not be overlooked when councils of social agencies
require additional person power. However, the actual extent and the
success of the council's planning efforts will depend largely on
member agencies' commitments to working together.

Even as a voluntary council, member agencies can take significant
steps towards comprehensive human resources planning. They can agree
to work on an overall assessment of community needs, an inventory of
available resources, and a statement of goals and objectives, which
they will work together towards meeting. They agree that agencies
will confer with each other as part of this process before each agency
prepares its plan for services. They may agree that agencies applying

for grants or contract funds will submit their applications to the
council for review and possible revision before submitting them to
the funding agencies. At any time during this process, the council
may advise local elected officials of its activities, including
which community needs the council has identified and what efforts
agencies are making to meet these needs. For citizen input during
this process the council may choose either to rely on the advisory
boards of the member agencies or to establish a new board to serve
the council itself.

Support of local elected officials for council planning efforts
greatly assists the council by giving it moral support and formal
recognition. Local elected officials may ask the council to perform
certain tasks that they or their staffs had previously performed.
Elected officials may designate the council as the official body
to provide comments on human resources requests in the A-95 review
process, or elected officials may request the council to perform some
of the duties of a human resources planning office by providing public
funds for planning staff work under the auspices of the council.
Finally, the council may become fully recognized as the major human
services planning unit in the county, and it may assume tasks appropri-
ate to its role. It may, by this time, become necessary for the council
to consider assigning some of its work tasks to subcommittees. Such
a restructuring helps to assure that people's interests and talents
are utilized in the best possible ways. It is also a natural organi-
zational step for any agency that assumes more responsibilities as
it matures.

The potential advantages and disadvantages of the council of
social agencies approach to comprehensive human resources planning
depend, in part, on the amount of responsibility which any particular
council arrangement involves. In general, the greater the commitment
of the member agencies to the planning process that the council has
engaged in, the more beneficial the arrangement is likely to be.
Comprehensive human resources planning is likely to be accomplished
in a coordinated and integrated manner in this situation. More speci-
fically, this approach may have several potential advantages: First,
this approach is inexpensive, insofar as it initially requires an
investment primarily of time and a willingness to coordinate activities.

No new staff are initially required because the council can rely on its members, volunteers, students, or health and welfare councils for assistance in its early stages. Second, in the absence of any other coordinative activity, this approach, even if relatively little respon- sibility is involved, is at least a "first step" and provides a setting for comprehensive human resources planning activities. It is a logical building block upon which to build a planning process.

This approach, however, has two potential <u>disadvantages</u>: First, this approach is voluntary, and as such, remains informal; it may provide little structure for the ongoing activities required for a planning process. Second, unless the council can eventually hire support staff, this alternative is likely to produce a situation in which the council reaches an impasse where it can go no farther, because of growing demands upon limited volunteer staff time.

5

What are the responsibilities
of service agencies, planning staff,
advisory boards, & elected officials?
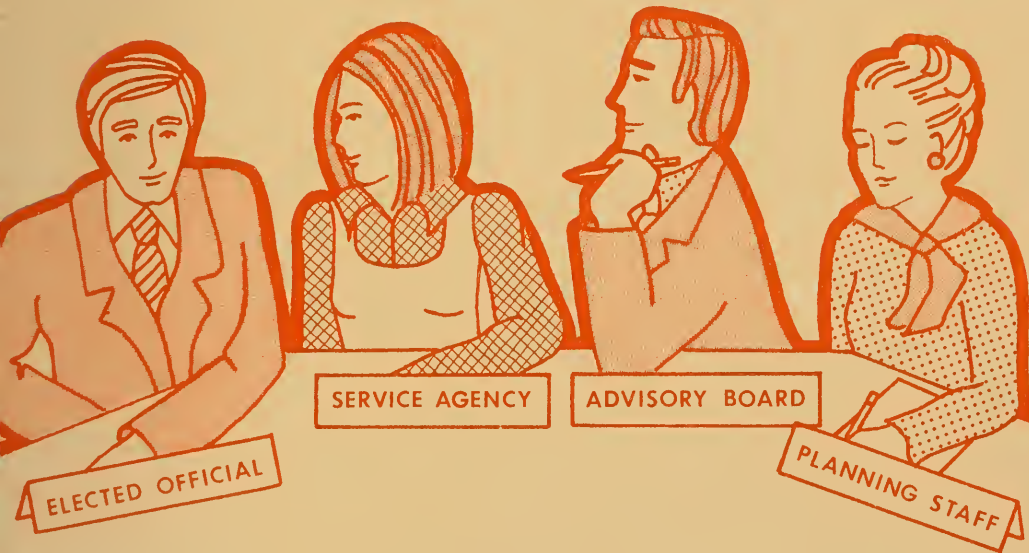
Summary

- Service provider agencies must be committed to the process of comprehensive human resources planning.

- Planning staff are primarily responsible for responding to the informational needs of service agencies, advisory groups, and local elected officials.

- Advisory boards are important because they provide a layman and/or consumer viewpoint and can aid in the determination of community goals and objectives.

- Local elected officials make final determinations on action strategies and budget decisions. They can also be extremely valuable in gaining public support for the planning process.

- Service provider agencies must be committed to the process of comprehensive human resources planning.

All service agencies, whether public or voluntary, share similar responsibilities for providing human services to the community. In the third alternative discussed in the preceding section, service agencies direct the comprehensive planning process; whereas, in the first and second alternatives the agencies participate in a process directed by an office subordinate to local elected officials. A comprehensive human resources planning process might include three categories of service agencies: a) public agencies directly accountable to elected county officials, such as an office on aging or a department of housing and community development; b) public agencies directed at the State level with offices at the county level, such as a department of juvenile services or a department of social services; and c) voluntary, private agencies, supported by some combination of public and private funds, such as a family and children's society or a voluntary hospital.

What is important in any arrangement for comprehensive human resources planning is that service agencies share responsibility for coordinating their activities to develop an integrated service system that can respond to community needs. Several kinds of support from service providers are necessary for the planning process to be effective. The agencies must agree not simply to participate in the process, they must agree to share their perceptions of community needs and be willing to discuss the ways that they are attempting to meet these needs. They must also be willing to freely discuss their agencies' short and long-range planning efforts, including their own organizational plans (Will new staff be added? Are satellite or branch offices going to be opened? Will new services be offered or others cut back?). Staff and financial resources must be discussed openly if true progress is to be made in cooperatively meeting needs. In addition to sharing information, these agencies must be willing to join together during the implementation stage to assure that strategies are translated into actions.

A commitment to honestly working together is what comprehensive human resources planning is all about, and it is the only way that it will work.

- Planning staff are primarily responsible for responding to the informational needs of service agencies, advisory groups, and local elected officials.

Regardless to whom planning staff are directly responsible, staff members will have similar responsibilities. In the first and second alternatives, staff members will be directly subordinate to local elected officials; whereas, in the third alternative, staff members will work for service agencies. However, they will all be expected to carry out the steps of the planning process (such as needs assessment, resource inventory and monitoring and evaluation) which require collecting and analyzing information. The most effective contribution to the planning process that staff can make is their response to the informational needs of local elected officials, service agencies, and advisory groups.

Planning staff, because of their experience and skills in human resources planning, are most often given responsibilities related to data gathering and analysis. These include major work in the areas of needs assessment and resource inventory, the comparison of resources to needs, identifying unmet and undermet needs, the development of goals and objectives, and monitoring and evaluation. While this may look like an inclusive listing of all of the steps of the planning process, it is important to bear in mind that the scope of the planning staffs' responsibilities is directly related to the extent of involvement of service agencies and advisory groups in the planning process. The greater the involvement of these two groups, the more the planning staff can concentrate their energies in promoting coordination and in specific work areas such as monitoring and evaluation. Planning staff have key role in helping service agencies and advisory groups design alternative action strategies to be presented to decision-makers. They may also be valuable in costing out these alternatives or laying out the relative merits of each alternative.

Planning staff work within the policy framework that is set by the local elected officials. They must also be sensitive to the particular needs and perspectives of both service providers and citizens' groups. In addition, the planning staff are directly responsible for the day-to-day work of the planning office or the planning activities of the council of social agencies. They schedule meetings, handle correspondence, record minutes, and the like. These rather routine tasks are essential to the successful functioning of a planning group and should not be overlooked.

- Advisory boards are important because they provide a layman and/or consumer viewpoint and can aid in the determination of community goals and objectives.

Citizens participate in the planning process primarily through their representation on citizen advisory boards. Although the specific make-up of citizen advisory boards may vary with the three alternatives, the responsibilities of advisory board members are similar. Advisory boards improve the planning process by including citizens' views of needs, problems, and solutions. The boards or advisory groups serve as the basic connecting link between citizens and the planning process. Throughout the planning process they may provide information about such questions as these: What are community needs? Why do the needs exist? How well are existing services meeting these needs? Why may existing services not be meeting needs as well as they should? What goals should be considered in moving to deal with unmet or undermet needs? What action strategies would be most effective in contributing to goals? After implementation, to what degree have action strategies been effective in meeting needs?

Including citizens' views in the planning process is frequently required by funding sources. But, more importantly, citizens' advisory boards make it possible to make decisions utilizing more diverse information, and to create public support for the decisions which are made.

Board members have a dual responsibility related to their participation in the planning process. They must be sensitive

to what the members in the community are saying and feeling about human services. They must solicit the opinions of recipients (past and current) of county services, and other residents. In addition, board members should explain to residents their viewpoints or the recommendations they make to the planning process. Engaging in this two-way communication, board members can build support for the planning process by keeping the community informed and helping them to understand it.

- Local elected officials make final determinations on action strategies and budget decisions. They can also be extremely valuable in gaining public support for the planning process.

Whichever alternative a community chooses for human resources planning, local elected officials will hold legal and fiscal responsibility for budgeting public funds and making final selections from alternative action strategies to meet community needs. Whether the planning process is directly subordinate to the officials' office, as in the first and second alternatives, or is physically distanced, as in the third, elected officials still set the framework by providing policy guidance to the planning process.

Their other important function relates to gaining public support for the process. They can offer positive support for the planning process by publicly commiting themselves to engaging in the process and to using the recommendations developed by the process. Local elected officials should recognize their role in generating community support for a comprehensive planning process. The task of developing public support should begin with the first efforts to organize a comprehensive planning process and should continue as comprehensive planning becomes an established ongoing activity. If officials can help to make the planning process open and visible to community members, they will help them to see comprehensive planning as a beneficial activity - something in which they have an interest. Community members will be more likely to support planning outcomes if they believe that they have had the opportunity to present their position during the process of deliberation and planning.

Local elected officials can promote community acceptance of the comprehensive planning effort by indicating publicly their own strong support for the process. Officials should be prepared to use the media to inform citizens of recent and pending planning decisions. Officials should encourage staff members to make regular presentations on planning activities at meetings of county and local government bodies. Officials and staff members should make themselves sensitive to community views by following events in the media and by listening to the citizen advisory board. Open lines of communication among elected officials, staff members, advisory board members, and citizens are a necessity. The process of identifying problems, selecting goals, and developing action strategies will have to include affected parties in order to generate the public support necessary for implementation.

Officials can support the planning effort by helping to secure adequate funding for planning activities. Whichever alternative is followed, the earliest efforts in comprehensive planning may be carried out through relatively informal arrangements. In the early stages of comprehensive planning, it may be possible to support the planning process by re-allocating resources and funds already in the community. However, if these efforts are to grow into an integrated and ongoing process, they will require additional support. The amount of new financial commitment necessary will depend on the size of the planning effort and the degree to which existing resources can be consolidated.

Local elected officials may help to secure both public and private local funds. The county government may be able to reallocate funds from other uses to provide money for comprehensive planning and service delivery. Similarly, city governments within the county may be able to make reallocations. In addition, elected officials may be able to solicit financial support from the local Chamber of Commerce, individual businesses, or the United Way. The business or corporate community may be persuaded by the potential that their relatively small contributions may bring relatively large gains in the efficiency of local government. Foundations should not be overlooked as possible sources of financial support for innovative local planning projects. Although they are probably

not able to provide any funds, the National Association of Counties (NACO), which is headquartered in Washington, D. C., can provide limited technical assistance and is preparing some guidance materials that will be available shortly.

Local elected officials may also be able to get public or private funds from outside the locality. General revenue-sharing money from the Federal government may be used to support comprehensive planning. Specific agencies of the Federal government offer additional funds. For example, ACTION provides one-year non-renewable grants for the purpose of expanding or improving services to low-income residents through the hiring of a volunteer program coordinator. Regional offices of the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, although phasing out the Partnership Grants Program, should not be overlooked as sources of potential monies through special research and demonstration funds. And although the funds have been limited in the last few years, the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development offers funds under Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954 for the purpose of assisting State and local governments in doing comprehensive planning.

Although elected officials may have limited time which they can devote to planning on an ongoing basis, they can have significant influence over the form and direction of planning decisions by giving attention to the way in which the planning process is originally designed. Because the selection of planning staff will significantly affect the nature of the planning process, elected officials can indicate their support for the planning process by taking an interest in the selection of appropriate staff persons. Further, because a citizen advisory board is the major means for citizens to know about the planning process and the major mechanism for the inclusion of their viewpoints, elected officials should take an active role in the selection and appointment of citizens to the advisory board.

These activities - the securing of funds, commitment to the planning process, involvement in the selection of staff, and appointment of citizens to advisory boards - all indicate to a community their local officials's public support for a comprehensive human resources planning process. The public support of local

officials will have a cyclical effect because it will serve to vitalize the involvement and participation of service agencies, staff, and advisory groups, and the implementation of action strategies to meet identified community needs. Local governments can take strong and clearly identifiable roles in the human resources planning process; these roles are outlined in an extremely helpful publication, Managing Human Services, published in 1977 by the International City Manager's Association. These roles include advocacy; information and referral; coordination of resource provision; regulation, technical assistance and catalyst; program initiation and demonstration; program administration and service contracting; and direct service delivery. These functions obviously represent varying degrees of involvement along a continuum; there is no right or wrong function for a local government to assume; only that which matches their ability or interest at any particular point in time. As a local government's commitment to the planning process increases, it then becomes easier to assume a more involved and active role.

6

How do you find the best staff
& advisory boards to participate
in the planning process?

Summary

- Staff need to have certain "technical" skills as well as an ability to work well with people.

- Advisory boards should represent the community and all of its interests and experiences.

- Staff need to have certain "technical" skills as well as an ability to work well with people.

The selection of staff and the appointment of citizens to advisory groups are critical to the success of a local planning effort. Staff are essential because of the information-processing (data gathering and analysis) skills they bring to the process; they lighten the load of local officials and advisory boards in very important areas. The right staff can make all the difference.

Whatever form the comprehensive human resources planning effort takes, it should be supported by a staff of the proper size and qualifications necessary to carry out the comprehensive planning tasks. Initially, it is important to have assistance from staff members who possess the technical skills necessary to set the planning process in motion. It is also important that staff possess skills in working with people, as a large part of their job will involve coordination and liaison activities. Because comprehensive planning involves new working relationships locally, officials should give careful attention to building trust among planning staff members who may not have experience working together.

The staff which is assembled should include persons possessing three kinds of skills: a) expertise in substantive human resource areas, such as health or manpower; b) expertise in planning and management, so as to bring a comprehensive problem-solving orientation to the human resources planning effort; and c) skills enabling them to work in groups with other staff members, staff members of service agencies, citizens, and elected officials.

Whichever organizational alternative is chosen, staff members will need to be clear about their relationships with service agencies, local elected officials, and advisory boards. Staff members need to have working relationships with service agencies, so that they can acquire the information necessary to develop and make recommendations on alternative action strategies. In addition, staff members should receive clear direction about the kinds of information and recommendations they should provide to the other actors in the planning process.

Staff members for a comprehensive human resources planning effort may be selected from a number of sources. If elected officials want to develop a planning process such as the first explained, they may choose to "borrow" existing management or planning staff from service agencies (for example, aging, consumer affairs, community development, human rights, and manpower services). They may hire new staff. Temporarily, they may use their own staff. Before the county has funds to support a large staff, elected officials may enlarge the planning effort through ad hoc arrangements involving appropriate volunteers, students, or public service employees.

If elected officials wish to develop an alternative similar to the second, they may be able to have existing staff members from the county planning office re-assigned to human resources planning. In this case, these staff members should be persons who can communicate well with both human services agencies and physical planners. As with the first arrangement, elected officials may also hire members, temporarily use their own staff, or initially rely on ad hoc volunteer arrangements.

The social agencies which develop the third alternative may have a difficult time creating staff support because the agencies will have little surplus staff to invest in the comprehensive planning process. They may choose to begin with ad hoc arrangements involving volunteers, students, or public service employees. In addition, they may seek some of the kinds of financial support discussed earlier in order to hire staff to work with the council.

- Advisory boards should represent the community and all of its interests and experiences.

The dual nature of advisory board responsibilities was explained earlier. It refers to their importance as a vehicle for citizen input to the planning process and to the role they play in explaining, and reporting back to the community, their actions and recommendations.

Citizen advisory groups can be most effective when they include representatives of various community interests and experiences. Broad representation on the board will contribute to the legitimacy and

acceptance of its recommendation. The board should include service agency representatives; present, past, and potential clients of service agencies; and citizens with interests in developing strategies to meet community needs. Because these members are likely to have different concerns and views about needs and services, they should receive special training at the beginning of their work. This training should help people with different outlooks to appreciate the views of others and to work with each other. It should also educate citizens to understand and become more familiar with the basic issues involved in comprehensive human resources planning.

The role and the form of the citizen advisory group will vary with the alternative chosen for the comprehensive human resources planning process. With the first two alternatives explained, local elected officials may designate citizen advisory boards. In doing so, the officials may either ask the boards to make recommendations for the officials' final decision-making, or the officials may choose to delegate certain responsibilities directly to the boards themselves.

More specifically, if local elected officials decide to create a county office for comprehensive human resources planning, they have a choice regarding the establishment of a citizen advisory board. It is likely that each of the existing agencies consolidated into the new human resources office (now drawn under the responsibilities of the planning office) will have its own advisory board, and elected officials will need to decide whether to establish an overall advisory board responsible to the human resources office. Officials may want to wait until the human resources office staff reaches a certain size before establishing a separate advisory board if many of the existing service agencies do not already have advisory boards. Or elected officials may want to establish a separate advisory board for the human resources office if there is no existing board which takes a comprehensive overview of human resources planning.

If local elected officials decide to expand the responsibilities of the county planning office, a citizen advisory board will already be in place in the form of the county planning commission. Officials should consider expanding the focus of commission members when they are asked to consider human resources planning issues. It may be reasonable to modify the county planning commission to include

persons with interest and expertise in human resources areas. This can be done by filling vacancies as they occur with new blood so that the commission may represent a more balanced perspective that integrates traditional land use concerns with human resources concerns.

When individual agency representatives agree to meet and form an organization such as a council of social agencies, they bring to that organization the many varied perspectives and policies of their own agencies. Their actions are often determined by and always accountable to the boards of their employing agencies. But it is also important to understand that by becoming involved in comprehensive human resources planning through the auspices of a council of social agencies (by joining a planning subcommittee or task force of the council), these agency representatives will also recognize the council as a governing board. This example becomes more clear with the case study of the Planning Task Force of the Council of Social Agencies in Cecil County, which is presented in the next Section.

7

What are some examples of county comprehensive human resources planning efforts?

PLANNING TASK FORCE

COUNCIL OF SOCIAL AGENCIES

BUREAU OF CITIZEN SERVICES

Summary

- The Howard County Bureau of Citizen Services is effective as an office for the consolidated management and planning of human services.

- The Kent County Council of Social Agencies reviews grant applications in an effort to promote coordination of services and elimination of program duplication.

- The Planning Task Force of the Cecil County Council of Social Agencies is committed to the process of coordinated and comprehensive human resources planning through member agency participation.

- **The Howard County Bureau of Citizen Services is effective as an office for the consolidated management and planning of human services.**

The three examples of approaches to comprehensive human resources planning that follow in this section correspond closely to the alternative structures for planning that were described in Section IV. They are not, however, meant to correspond exactly to those alternatives. Each local planning project is unique and each is still quite young. Rather than following any set "pattern," they are evolving from month to month and adapting to fit the new responsibilities they assume.

Howard County represents an example of the first alternative described, where a local elected official created a new Bureau of Citizen Services to improve the management of human services. In this case, the county executive received support from the local Association of Community Services, which wanted to consolidate service efforts and increase the comprehensiveness with which agencies planned for community needs.

When the Bureau of Citizen Services was formed in October, 1975, existing county service agencies were joined together as divisions of the unified Bureau. The Bureau includes five divisions: the Office on Aging, the Division of Consumer Affairs, the Division of Community Development, the Division of Human Rights, and the Division of Manpower Services. Presently, each division has its own staff and its own advisory board. The Bureau is using some students to supplement the efforts of the full-time staff. The Bureau is considering developing an advisory group to serve the Bureau as a whole.

The Bureau is working toward comprehensive human resources planning in two ways. First, the divisions within the Bureau are working with increased coordination. For example, staff members who deliver services in the different areas are trained so that they understand how their activities affect the services in other areas. More formally, the Community Development Division and the Office on Aging work together on Section 8 rent supplement for the elderly. Although much of the coordination within the Bureau currently relates

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to direct service delivery, staff meetings focus on ways of coordinating the planning of services as well.

A second way in which the Bureau is working toward comprehensive human resources planning is in establishing working relationships with other service agencies. The Bureau is developing collaborative relationships with county offices of State services, such as the Employment Service and the Department of Social Services. One example of collaborative service delivery is the joint work of the Bureau's Office on Aging with the Community Action Council, the Agricultural Extension Service, and the Department of Recreation and Parks in the implementation of a congregate feeding program for the elderly.

The Bureau wants to expand its staff in order to have staff members sufficiently detached from day-to-day service delivery to do more comprehensive planning. The Bureau's goal is to consolidate all public and private human service agencies in Howard County in one organization and one building. Once all service agencies have become part of a comprehensive planning process, the Bureau wants to develop branch multi-service centers in outlying areas of the County which could serve the distinct needs of specific groups in the County.

- **The Kent County Council of Social Agencies reviews grant applications in an effort to promote coordination of services and elimination of program duplication.**

Kent County represents the arrangement in which a semi-autonomous body (the Council of Social Agencies) has assumed responsibility for one aspect of human resources planning through the direct assignment of the County Commissioners. Concerned about duplication and fragmentation in services, the Commissioners decided that the CSA could serve in a review capacity and advise them as to the feasibility and desirability of new programs or services. As the County Commissioners sign off on all local requests for Federal assistance before they are forwarded to the State Clearinghouse, the Council provides a valuable service by keeping the Commissioners informed of the status of human services in the county and advising them as to

the need for additional programs or services. The full membership of
the Council would obviously be too cumbersome to provide a timely
review of grant applications, so a review subcommittee has been
formed. In addition to the review of grant applications, this
committee attempts to promote coordination among service providers.

The Council of Social Agencies in Kent County was seen as the
logical organization to perform this review and advisory function.
The Council includes over 20 member agencies, and as such, is repre-
sentative of most human service providers of the County. It is also
the only recognized and ongoing group in the County concerned with
issues surrounding the coordination of human services. The appoint-
ment of one individual (rather than the Council) to serve in a grant
review capacity was not only seen as unnecessary (given the poten-
tial of the CSA to perform this function), but it could also have
served to alienate CSA member agencies.

The CSA has been performing this review function for approximately
eight months. They have just recently become incorporated and will now
be legally able to seek and apply for grants on their own (although
there is no indication that they will be moving in this direction in
the near future). Although the Kent County Council of Social Agencies
is not involved in a full comprehensive human resources planning
process such as described in Section III, it is apparent that the
County Commissioners have recognized the important role that the Coun-
cil can play in both promoting coordination among service providers and
helping to ensure a responsive and integrated service delivery system.

- **The Planning Task Force of the Cecil County
  Council of Social Agencies is committed to
  the process of coordinated and
  comprehensive human resources planning
  through member agency participation.**

The need for a coordinated approach to human services planning
is often recognized first by local service providers and concerned
citizens. While it is preferable to have the direct involvement
and interest of local elected officials at the start of the planning
process, it is possible that the planning process can be initiated

from "the bottom up." This is exactly what happened in Cecil County.

In May, 1975, several members of the Cecil County Council of Social Agencies expressed concern that there was no countywide planning for human services and overall social concerns. A Comprehensive Plan had recently been prepared outlining the future physical growth of the County, and it was felt that there was a need for planning in the social areas as well. This need was based on an increasing concern with maximizing the use of existing resources and with developing new resources to meet the future needs of the County. At this time, Maryland Action for Foster Care sponsored a conference on caring in the County which arrived at similar conclusions.

A committee was appointed by the Chairman of the Council to look into alternative ways of organizing a human services planning effort and into where the major responsibility for the effort should be placed. It was decided that the Council of Social Agencies, which is made up of representatives of approximately 40 public and private agencies, would be the most appropriate place to initiate an overall planning effort. In September, 1975, the Task Force on Human Services was formally established to work with the Cecil County Planning Department. Two months later, an agreement was signed by the Council of Social Agencies, the Planning Department, and the County Commissioners giving the Human Services Task Force the responsibility for coordinating this effort for human services planning in the county.

The Task Force set out with a long term agenda of understanding the system of services that presently existed, determining what type of future system would be desirable, and developing plans to ensure that the desired future would be reached. In order to begin this process, assistance was requested and received from the Division of Urban Affairs at the University of Delaware and the Maryland Department of State Planning. With their assistance, a questionnaire was developed and distributed to over 50 agencies in the county to explore existing resources and identify areas of concern. An analysis of the responses to the questionnaire was prepared and distributed in October, 1976.

By this time, it was becoming increasingly difficult for the
Task Force to function with only volunteer staff. It was felt that
in order to carry out the next steps in the planning process, the
Task Force would require professional staff assistance. The Maryland
Department of State Planning, through its own Partnership Grant from
the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, offered a
one-year grant to the Council of Social Agencies to hire a planner
to support the work of the planning Task Force. That planner was
hired in April, 1977.

During the time since its formation, the Human Services Planning
Task Force has begun laying the groundwork for a more responsive and
coordinated system of services for the residents of Cecil County. Its
major achievements to date include the following:

1. Providing an ongoing mechanism for interagency
   communication and cooperation.
2. Demonstrating an effective working relationship
   between State and local agencies.
3. Working with the Citizens Committee on the
   Comprehensive Plan.
4. Analyzing the present situation and identifying
   future needs.

The Human Services Planning Task Force, now with the assistance of
the planning specialist, is proceeding with the development and
implementation of a coordinated and participative approach to human
services planning. Through the use of sub-committees that will
begin to plan specific interventions, they hope to draw on the exper-
tise and commitment of people outside the Task Force itself and to
demonstrate some of the potential benefits of cooperative action.
The Task Force is also beginning to look into ways of continuing the
planning effort beyond the term of this year's grant.

Specific objectives of the Task Force during the coming year
are:

1. To build a stronger commitment to human services
   planning within Cecil County.
2. To design ways of strengthening and maintaining
   relationships among different agencies and with
   other sectors of the community.

3. To explore alternative ways of coordinating volunteer activities throughout the County.
4. To identify and implement methods for continuously assessing the needs of County residents.
5. To increase understanding of, and access to new resources for the delivery of human services.

Additional Readings of Interest

Much has been written about the philosophy and techniques of
human services planning; bibliographies on specialized topics in
this area reveal literally hundreds of entries. The list below is
by no means exclusive — it merely represents a collection of books
and articles that have been considered by the authors of this
Guidebook to be valuable to those who are interested in comprehensive
human resources planning at the local level.

Two newsletters have been found to be both valuable and informa-
tive.

- Opportunities is published by the New England Municipal
  Center (Pettee Brook Offices, P. O. Box L, Durham, New
  Hampshire, 03824). An annual subscription (11 issues)
  is $10.000.

- Sharing is part of Project SHARE and is published by the
  Department of Health, Education and Welfare (P. O. Box
  2309, Rockville, Maryland 20852). Project SHARE is a
  "national clearinghouse to improve the management of
  human services." They also publish —

    - quarterly journals of human service abstracts
    - a bibliography series (on special topics, e. g.,
      management of the human service system, roles
      for general-purpose governments in services
      integration, etc.).

  Upon request, Project SHARE will provide specialized
  annotated bibliographies. All of their services are
  available free of cost.

Readings in specialized topics include:

1) COORDINATION

> Coordinating Human Services: A Case Study of an
> Interagency Network, Benson, G. Kenneth and
> Kunce, Joseph T., Missouri University Press,
> Columbia, Missouri, 1974.

> _Coordination in Human Services_, Maryland Department
> of State Planning, Baltimore, Maryland, 1978

2) CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

> _Citizen Participation_, Economic and Social
> Opportunities, Inc. Santa Clara, California.
> This booklet describes the citizen partici-
> pation requirements of major Federal programs.

> _Obtaining Citizen Feedback: The Application of_
> _Citizen Surveys to Local Governments_, Webb,
> Kenneth and Hatry, Harry. The Urban
> Institute, Washington, D. C., 1973 (Publication
> number URI-18000).

3) PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

> "A Group Process Model for Problem Identification
> and Program Planning," Delbecq, Andre L.,
> _Journal of Applied Behavioral Science_, July-
> August, 1971.

> _Group Techniques for Program Planning: A Guide_
> _to Nominal Group and Delphi Processes_,
> Delbecq, Andre L., Scott Foresman and Co.,
> 1975.

4) NEEDS ASSESSMENT

> _Assessing Human Needs: A Handbook_, League of
> California Cities, Sacramento, California, 1975.

> _Needs Assessment: A Critical Perspective_,
> U. S. Department of Health, Education and
> Welfare, Office of the Assistant Secretary
> for Planning and Evaluation, Office of
> Program Systems, 1977.

5) SOCIAL INDICATORS

> _A Guide to Social Indicators for Local Government_,
> Southern California Association of Governments,
> 600 S. Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 1000, Los
> Angeles, California, 90005, 1975.

> _Putting Social Indicators to Work: An Annotated_
> _Bibliography_, Office of Planning and Research,
> State of California, 400 Tenth Street,
> Sacramento, California, 1977.

6) CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS

    BASIS - Baltimore Area Service Identification
       System, Health and Welfare Council of
       Central Maryland (in cooperation with the
       Baltimore City Department of Planning),
       901 Court Square Building, 200 E. Lexington
       Street, Baltimore, Maryland, 1976.

    An Inventory of State Administered Human Service
       Programs, Maryland Department of State
       Planning, Baltimore, Maryland, 1976.

7) BUDGETING FOR HUMAN SERVICES

    Budgeting for Human Service Programs and Providers -
       A Practical Guide for Municipal Decision-Makers,
       New England Municipal Center, 1976. ($2.50)*

    Approaches to Budgeting and Cost Analysis, Project
       SHARE, Rockville, Maryland, 1976 (This is a
       bibliography of additional material on this
       subject.).

8) HUMAN SERVICES PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

    Community Planning for Human Services, New England
       Municipal Center,* 1977 ($5.00)

    Opportunities for Municipal Participation in Human
       Services, New England Municipal Center,* 1977
       ($5.00).

    Human Services Consortium: A Combined Municipal
       Effort in Human Services Management, New England
       Municipal Center,* 1975 ($2.50).

    Human Services Integration at the Community Level:
       A Six-County Report, National Association of
       Counties Research Foundation, Washington, D. C.
       1973.

    Human Resources Development: Capacity Building
       for Local Government, League of Kansas Municipali-
       ties, 112 West 7th Street, Topeka, Kansas 66603,
       1974 (This is   general guidance on comprehensive
       planning and special sections on target populations
       and special problems).

"A Guide to Human Resources Development in Small
   Cities," Mulrooney, Keith, F., Management
   Information Service Report, International
   City Management Association, Washington, D. C.
   1973 (Also reprinted in the publication
   listed above).

Alternative Approaches to Human Services Planning:
   Nine Case Studies on Human Services Planning in
   State, Regional, and Local Organizations, Family
   Services Institute for Children and Families,
   Inc., 1911 North Ft. Myer Drive, Arlington,
   Virginia, 1974 ($5.00).

Readings on Human Services Planning, Family
   Services Institute for Children and Families,
   Inc., 1911 North Ft. Myer Drive, Arlington,
   Virginia, 1975 ($5.00).

Comprehensive Human Resources Planning Guide,
   Puget Sound Governmental Conference, Seattle,
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